

VZCZCXRO0818  
PP RUEHQU  
DE RUEHPU #1524 2611633  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 181633Z SEP 07  
FM AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6852  
INFO RUEHZH/HAITI COLLECTIVE  
RUEHBR/AMEMBASSY BRASILIA 1636  
RUEHSA/AMEMBASSY PRETORIA 1454  
RUCOWCV/CCGDSEVEN MIAMI FL  
RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J2 MIAMI FL

C O N F I D E N T I A L PORT AU PRINCE 001524

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 09/17/2017

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [HA](#)

SUBJECT: "FUSION" CHAIRMAN GILLES PESSIMISTIC ABOUT  
POLITICAL FUTURE

Classified By: Ambassador Janet Sanderson. Reason: E.O. 12958 1.4 (b)  
, (d)

Summary

1. (C) "Fusion" Chairman Serge Gilles is increasingly worried that the lack of strong political party structures has made Haiti's parliament dysfunctional, and that President Preval has no desire to work constructively with parliament, boding badly for Haiti's political future. Many Haitian political leaders and observers share this view but offer no solutions.  
End Summary.

2. (C) In a morning coffee with the Ambassador September 14, Fusion Chairman Serge Gilles opined that the legislative and executive branches are increasingly dysfunctional, impeding the consolidation of Haiti's democracy. He identified weakness of political parties as the key defect. With senators and deputies subject to no party discipline, President Preval has no way to muster a parliamentary majority to pass legislation. Legislators increasingly act impulsively and irresponsibly. Aware they have accomplished little since their election in 2005, and sensing pressure from increasingly dissatisfied constituents, deputies and senators now see their main role as attacking the government and revoking government ministers, and concentrating on their own re-election. Gilles did not spare his own party Fusion and its deputies and Senators from this criticism. He complained that President Preval is part of the problem, as he considers political parties unimportant and makes little effort to work constructively with parliament. Gilles also lamented that few in the international community recognize political parties as a key institution in democratic development.

3. (C) Gilles also directed his dysfunctionality argument at the GOH and the President. He claimed Prime Minister Alexis and most of his cabinet are in a "panic" that they could be convoked before parliament any day and felled by a vote of no confidence (Note: This is a relatively simple procedure under Haiti's 1987 constitution: a motion to convoke ministers for a vote of no confidence requires the vote of just five deputies or senators. End note.) Culture Minister Elie suffered this fate in July and there are now rumblings in the Chamber of Deputies against Minister of Public Works Frantz Verella. President Preval allows his ministers no autonomy to direct their ministries, micro-manages their portfolios, and sets up various "commissions" that compete with, rather than complement, the work of cabinet ministries, according to Gilles.

4. (C) This dysfunctionality spanning two branches of

government, said Gilles, is coming to a head on the elections issue. The government should never have allowed the situation to develop where this late in the game, it is making no preparations to carry out constitutionally-mandated elections for one-third of the Senate, or for the indirect elections for municipal and department-level councils, that would then select a Permanent Electoral Council (CEP).

¶5. (C) The only remedy Gilles offered concerned his own party: he would convene periodic "retreats" of party leaders and Fusion deputies and Senators in an effort to improve coordination and cooperation between elected representatives and party management.

Comment

-----

¶6. (C) Gilles is absolutely correct that parliamentarians lack party discipline. The Fusion leadership frequently purports to be one of the few parties even attempting to exercise control over its members of parliament. Gilles' analysis is in no way new: he reiterated rumblings common among Haitian political leaders that parliament is out of control and Preval is acting unilaterally. As Gilles said, chinks in the GOH armor are beginning to show more clearly as the issue of elections becomes increasingly problematic.  
SANDERSON